

Coastal Water Quality Network

The purpose of this Network is to provide basic measures of the ecological health of New Jersey's coastal waters. Temperature, salinity, suspended solids and oxygen measurements can provide information on the degree of environmental stress that organisms are exposed to. Nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) and chlorophyll relate to the amount of plant material in the water. Too much or too little plant material in the water can be detrimental to other organisms in the bay and ocean.

The Network monitors parameters such as dissolved oxygen, salinity, nitrogen, phosphorus, secchi depth, temperature, chlorophyll and suspended solids. Samples are collected four times per year (once each quarter). In 2003, NJDEP began operation of four automated water quality monitoring buoys. The sensors measure conditions such as dissolved oxygen, salinity, temperature, pH and turbidity. They continually measure these parameters every 15 minutes and send this information to computers at the Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring. Those computers process the data, graph the results and post the information on the Bureau's web page (www.state.nj.us/dep/wmm/bmw). Updates to the data occur once every two hours.

Data and results from this Network may be obtained from the Bureau's webpage (www.state.nj.us/dep/wmm/bmw) or by calling the Bureau at (609) 748-2000.

